

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

A' Claim 1 (currently amended): An electrical connector, comprising:
a plurality of electrically conducting members;
a first electrically conducting plate; and
a second electrically conducting plate positioned opposite to and oriented
substantially in parallel with the first electrically conducting plate; and
a first and second plurality of substantially parallel elongated electrically
conducting fingers; ~~formed in the respective first and second electrically conducting~~
plates; and
wherein each of the first and second plurality of fingers is capable of being ~~may~~
~~be independently bent and selectively manipulated such that some of the first and~~
second plurality of fingers electrically connect a respective one of the first and second
electrically conducting plates to a corresponding one of the plurality of electrically
conducting members and others of the first and second plurality of fingers do not
electrically connect a respective one of the first and second electrically conducting
plates to a corresponding one of the plurality of electrically conducting members.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The connector of claim 1, wherein each of the first
plurality of fingers is disposed in the first electrically conducting plate and is positioned
substantially opposite to a respective finger of the second plurality of fingers which are
disposed in the second electrically conducting plate.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The connector of claim 1, wherein each of the first
and second substantially planar electrically conducting plates is electrically connectable
to a ground potential.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The connector of claim 3, wherein each of the first and second substantially planar electrically conducting plates is electrically connected to a ground potential.

41 Claim 5 (currently amended): The connector of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of electrically conducting contact receptors positioned between and spaced from the first and second ~~substantially planar~~ electrically conducting plates; wherein each ~~respective one of the plurality~~ electrically conducting contact receptors is positioned between two oppositely disposed fingers; of the first and second plurality of fingers, and ~~wherein at least one finger of the first and second plurality of fingers is bent~~ towards the opposite electrically conducting plate to make ~~makes~~ electrical contact with a respective electrically conducting contact receptor ~~and to~~ grounds the respective electrically conducting plate connected thereto.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The connector of claim 1, ~~further comprising at least one electrical contact positioned adjacent and spaced from a respective finger, wherein substantially bending the finger~~ said some of the first and second plurality of fingers that electrically connect a respective one of the first and second electrically conducting plates to a corresponding one of the plurality of electrically conducting members are bent towards the ~~at least one electrical contact makes electrically connects the~~ corresponding one of the plurality of electrically conducting members to make electrical contact with a ground potential.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The connector of claim 1, wherein the first and second plurality of fingers are adapted to be selectively bent inwardly towards the opposite electrically conducting plate.

Claim 8 (original): The connector of claim 1 wherein at least some of the fingers are selectively bent inwardly towards the oppositely positioned electrically conducting plate to produce a customized pattern of grounded electrical contacts.

Claim 9 (currently amended): An electrical connector device, comprising:
a housing;
a plurality of electrically conducting fingers ~~pairs mounted in the housing in~~ electrical communication with a ground potential; and
a plurality of electrically conducting members extending at least partially into the housing;
~~wherein each respective electrically conducting member extends between a~~
A1 ~~finger pair;~~
~~wherein the fingers of each finger pair are spaced a first finite nonzero separation distance apart;~~
~~wherein one or both each of the plurality of fingers of a finger pair is arranged to be selectively and independently may be plastically deformed such that a first group of the plurality of fingers are electrically connected to a respective one of the plurality of electrically conducting members and a second group of the plurality of fingers are not electrically connected to a respective one of the plurality of electrically conducting members towards the other finger to space the fingers a second separation distance apart; and~~
~~wherein the first separation distance is greater than the second separation distance.~~

Claim 10 (currently amended): The device of claim 9, wherein ~~each the plurality of electrically conducting fingers are arranged to define finger pairs disposed opposite to each other, and each of the finger pairs~~ includes a first elongated electrically conducting finger spaced from a second elongated electrically conducting finger.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The device of claim 9, wherein plastic deformation of said first group of the plurality of fingers that are electrically connected to a respective one of the plurality of electrically conducting members causes said first group of fingers to be bent towards and to physically contact said respective one of the plurality of electrically conducting members ~~one or both fingers towards the other finger to space the fingers a second separation distance apart places one or both fingers in electrical communication with the respective electrically conducting member extending therebetween.~~

A/ Claim 12 (currently amended): An electrical connector apparatus, comprising:
a housing adapted to receive electrically conducting members;
a plurality of spaced electrically conducting members extending into the housing;
and

a ~~first~~ plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers ~~mounted in the housing~~
in electrical communication with one another and with a ground potential;

wherein the electrically conducting fingers are positioned such that each of the plurality of spaced electrically conducting members is substantially opposite a respective one of the first plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers; and

wherein each respective one of the plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers positioned opposite ~~an~~ one of the plurality of spaced electrically conducting members may be independently and selectively plastically deformed positioned such that a first group of the plurality of fingers are electrically connected to a respective one of the plurality of electrically conducting members and a second group of the plurality of fingers are not electrically connected to a respective one of the plurality of electrically conducting members ~~it electrically communicates with the respective oppositely positioned electrically conducting member.~~

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Claim 13 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 12, ~~further comprising~~
wherein the plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers includes a first and a
second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers ~~mounted in the housing in~~
electrical communication with the ground potential, wherein each finger of the second
plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers is positioned substantially opposite
to a respective finger of the first plurality of elongated fingers, and wherein each of the
plurality of electrically conducting members is positioned between two of the elongated
fingers.

Claim 14 (original): The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the electrically
conducting members are adapted to be coupled to the surface of a printed circuit board.

Claim 15 (original): An electrical connector device, comprising:
a female connector assembly; and
a male connector assembly insertible into the female connector assembly;
wherein the female connector assembly further comprises:
a central slot;
a plurality of electrically conducting contact receptors sequentially
positioned within the slot and extending beyond the female connector assembly;
at least one grounding slot; and
an electrically conducting ground plate having a plurality of bendable
electrically conducting fingers formed therein;
wherein the ground plate is electrically connected to a ground potential;
wherein the male connector assembly further comprises:
an elongated central portion adapted for insertion into the central slot;
a plurality of electrically conducting electrical contacts, each contact
having a first elongated prong and a second elongated prong; and
at least one elongated grounding portion adapted for insertion into the

grounding slot;

wherein the plurality of first elongated prongs are positioned to at least partially extend through the elongated central portion;

wherein each of the plurality of first elongated prongs is positioned to electrically communicate with a respective electrical contact receptor upon insertion of the elongated central portion into the central slot;

wherein the plurality of second elongated prongs are positioned to extend at least partially through the elongated grounding portion; and

wherein each second elongated prong is positioned substantially adjacent to and spaced from a respective bendable electrically conducting finger; and

wherein bending a respective bendable electrically conducting finger into contact with a respective second elongated prong actuates electric communication between the ground plate and a respective electrically conducting electrical contact, including the respective first elongated prong and anything in electrical communication therewith.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A method for producing an electrical connector, comprising the steps of:

- a) ~~providing a ground plate having bendable electrically conducting fingers formed therein; and~~ a plurality of electrically conducting members disposed opposite to each other;
- b) ~~positioning at least one~~ providing at least two of ground plates ~~disposed opposite to each other;~~
- c) providing a plurality of electrically conducting elongated fingers at a position such that the plurality of electrically conducting elongated fingers are capable of electrically connecting one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates ~~member adjacent at least one finger, wherein the at least one electrically conducting member is spaced from the respective at~~

- ~~least one finger; and~~
- d) processing individual ones of the plurality of elongated fingers such that each of a first group of the plurality of elongated fingers electrically connects one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates and each of a second group of the plurality of elongated fingers does not electrically connect one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The method of claim 16, ~~further comprising the steps of: wherein step d) includes the step of e) selecting the individual ones of the at least one electrically conducting members to be connected electrically to one of the ground plates via the first group of the plurality of elongated fingers; and~~

- d) ~~— bending the fingers adjacent to selected individual at least one electrically conducting member into electrical communication therewith.~~

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 17 wherein step d) is performed by an end user.

Claim 19 (original): The method of claim 17 wherein step d) is performed by a manufacturer.

Claim 20 (currently added): The method of claim 17, wherein step d) further comprises the step of bending the first group of the plurality of elongated fingers into electrical communication with one of the plurality of electrically conducting members.

Claim 21 (currently added): The method of claim 17, wherein the step d) further

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comprises the step of modifying the position of the first group of the plurality of elongated fingers.

Claim 22 (currently added): The method of claim 17, wherein the step d) further comprises the step of modifying the position of the first group of the plurality of elongated fingers relative to the at least two ground plates.

Claim 23 (currently added): The method of claim 17, wherein the step d) further comprises the step of modifying the position of the first group of the plurality of elongated fingers relative to the plurality of electrically conducting members.

Claim 24 (currently added): The method of claim 17, wherein the step d) further comprises the step of deforming the first group of the plurality of elongated fingers.

Claim 25 (currently added): The method of claim 17, wherein the plurality of elongated fingers are arranged in a first pattern prior to step d) and are arranged in a second pattern that is different from the first pattern after step d).

Claim 26 (currently added) An electrical connector, comprising:
a first and second plurality of electrically conducting members disposed opposite to each other;

at least two ground plates disposed opposite to each other;

a first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers arranged to be capable of electrically connecting one of the at least two ground plates and one of the first and second plurality of electrically conducting members; wherein

the first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers are arranged to be selectively and independently processed to product a customized pattern of grounded contacts such that a first group of the elongated fingers electrically

connect one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates and a second group of the elongated fingers do not electrically connect one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates.

Claim 27 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 26, the first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers are capable of being bent so as to electrically connect one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates.

A/ Claim 28 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 26, wherein the first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers are capable of being moved so as to electrically connect one of the plurality of electrically conducting members with one of the at least two ground plates.

Claim 29 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 26, wherein the first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers are capable of being moved relative to the plurality of electrically conducting members.

Claim 30 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 26, wherein the first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers are capable of being moved relative to the at least two ground plates

Claim 31 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 26, wherein the first and second plurality of elongated electrically conducting fingers are capable of being plastically deformed.

Claim 32 (currently added): An electrical connector, comprising:

an insulated housing;
first and second rows of electrically conducting members disposed opposite to each other and within the housing;

at least two electrically conductive plates disposed opposite to each other on opposite surfaces of the insulated housing; wherein

a first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are electrically connected to one of the at least two electrically conductive plates and a second group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are not electrically connected to either of the at least two electrically conductive plates.

A1 Claim 33 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 32, wherein the at least two electrically conductive plates are ground plates which are electrically connected to ground.

Claim 34 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 32, wherein the second group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members which are not electrically connected to either of the at least two electrically conductive plates are arranged to transmit signals through the connector.

Claim 35 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 32, further comprising a plurality of elongated electrically conductive fingers, wherein the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are electrically connected to the one of the at least two electrically conductive plates via the plurality of elongated electrically conductive fingers.

Claim 36 (currently added): An electrically connector according to Claim 35, wherein the plurality of fingers are arranged to contact a surface of the one of the at least two electrically conductive plates.

Claim 37 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 32, wherein the at least two electrically conductive plates are disposed on opposite outer surfaces of the insulated housing.

Claim 38 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 32, wherein the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are electrically connected to one of the at least two electrically conductive plates at an outer surface of the insulated housing.

Claim 39 (currently added): An electrical connector, comprising:
an insulated housing;

AI first and second rows of electrically conducting members disposed opposite to each other and within the housing;

a first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are electrically connected to ground at an outer portion of the insulated housing and a second group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are not electrically connected to ground and are arranged to transmit signals through the connector.

Claim 40 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 39, further comprising first and second ground plates disposed at the outer portion of the insulated housing, each of the first and second ground plates being electrically connected to one member of the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members.

Claim 41 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 39, further comprising a plurality of elongated electrically conductive fingers, wherein the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are

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electrically connected to ground via the plurality of elongated electrically conductive fingers.

Claim 42 (currently added): An electrically connector according to Claim 41, further comprising first and second ground plates disposed at the outer portion of the insulated housing and each of the first and second ground plates being electrically connected to one member of the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members, wherein each of the plurality of fingers is arranged to contact a surface of one of the first and second ground plates.

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Claim 43 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 40, wherein the first and second ground plates are disposed on opposite outer surfaces of the insulated housing.

Claim 44 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 39, wherein the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members are electrically connected to ground at different locations along two opposite outer surfaces of the insulated housing.

Claim 45 (currently added): An electrical connector according to Claim 39, wherein each member of the first group of the first and second rows of electrically conducting members is electrically connected to one of the first and second ground plates at a middle portion of the one of the first and second ground plates.
